



PRESS RELEASE

SOLO SHOW JUANAN SORIA

CREAR CAPAS

6 NOVEMBER – 17 DECEMBER 2022



'Construcción de una imagen. Dama de Cabezo Lucero' by Juanan Soria, 2021, oil on canvas, 160x100 cm

Husk Gallery is delighted to present Juanan Soria's inaugural solo show in its gallery space in Rivoli Brussels. Juanan Soria is fascinated by the history and sociocultural response to artefacts. His earlier series 'Destroy to build' dealt with artworks that were destroyed during conflict or war, a reflection on the importance of the signs of aggression and displacement during the lifetime of these artworks. In his new series of works at Husk Gallery, he investigates the layered 'nachleben' of archaeological finds from Iberian culture. The key to interpreting Juanan Soria's recent works is to take a 'stratigraphic' approach to his imagery.

In his three-part series of paintings, Soria depicts three well-known sculptures from Spain's protohistoric past which have stood the test of time incredibly well. The enigmatic sculptures '**Damas Ibéricas**' form the iconographic starting point for his research into the layers of meaning of the material culture in the light of recent archaeological methodology. The 'Dama de Elche', which dates back to the 5th-4th century BC, is undoubtedly the most famous work. It was brought to Madrid in 1941 during Franco's regime and popularised on a banknote among other things as a symbol of Spanish culture. The extent to which the nationalist Zeitgeist has influenced the interpretation of the work is proof of the potential sociopolitical significance of an artefact.

Juanan Soria is interested in the layers of meaning of these 'Iberian' artefacts from his native country. His artistic research delves into both the historical interpretation of artefacts and the information collected through images. He condenses all this information on his canvas, conceived as a magnified mobile phone screen. The image is cluttered with information, as if the viewer were contemplating a plethora of open windows on a computer screen. On the canvas, Soria's accumulation of visual information of each 'Dama' through time enters into a dialogue with digital images. The Photoshop tool 'Crear Capa' - create a layer - can also be taken literally. Before constructing layers of paint on his canvas, the artist's preliminary research for the composition relied on the assistance of Photoshop. Soria paints all these 'layers' in the broadest sense of the word traditionally, with oil paint, in a deliberate and highly precise manner. To share the genesis of his images with us, he even includes the black-and-white basic grid and tags of the image software. In this series of paintings, the material dashes of paint merge with the pixels of the digital creations.

Archaeological practice forms the subject of '**Capa 0**', the monumental installation of 130 small oil paintings on canvas, converted into an animation film. We see archaeologists at work on a site from the perspective of a drone, as well as a close-up of the stone object 'Inicio' that forms the starting point of the 'Crear capas' exhibition. The short animation film depicts the process of researching the stratigraphy of this object. Archaeological excavations have a somewhat destructive nature since they do remove layers of soil, even if the unearthed artefacts are still in fairly good condition. Juanan Soria encourages us to reflect on this paradoxical practice of destruction and preservation, which naturally leads to new interpretations and the emergence of various images with nuanced layers of meaning.





*'Cerrillo Blanco IV' by Juanan Soria, 2022,
pencil on Canson paper, 29,7 x 21 cm*

For another series titled '**Cerrillo Blanco**', he also drew inspiration from sculptures from Iberian culture (440-400 BC). These fragmented Iberian statues were hewn from the soft limestone of Santiago and found near the ancient city of Obulco in 1975. They are in 1,486 pieces, because another tribe, a village or an enemy once sought to destroy that culture and its monuments, as a 'Damnatio Memoriae' - a curse from history. Juanan Soria creates plastic forms in his paintings and drawings by freely accumulating fragments of these sculptures. Just as archaeologists have been challenged to reconstruct these images, Soria prompts us to subjectively analyse his complex compositions. These are once more created layer by layer using digital tools, before being painstakingly painted or drawn using traditional methods.

The use of new imaging technologies in archaeological research, such as LiDAR, inspired Juanan Soria to paint other artistic digital layers. In his '**LiDAR**' series, the artist faithfully paints computer images with the fluorescent palette of this technology, which relies on lasers and reflections to reveal objects underground.

Short CV



Juanan Soria (°1985, Ubeda, Spain) grew up in Andalusia. Currently, he lives and works in Ghent, Belgium. Beside painting and drawing, he creates installations and video work. He obtained a BA of Fine Arts at the University of Sevilla and a MA of Art Production at the Polytechnic University of Valencia. The Spanish artist completed several residencies, among others in Cordoba, Madrid and Ubeda, that led to exhibitions. Furthermore, he was declared laureate in several Spanish art prizes, in the field of painting and video art. Since 2013, he has been busy on the Belgian art scene among which solo shows in Ghent and several group shows. Recently, he was awarded with the

Third Prize of the 'Art Contest 2021' edition in Brussels and is currently preparing his upcoming solo show in 2023 at Carrefour des Arts in Brussels. His artworks are included in diverse public collections in Spain.

Download Juanan Soria's [full CV here](#)

Opening

Sunday 6 November 2022 from 2 to 7 pm in the presence of the artist

Extra Opening

Friday 11 November 2022 from 2 to 6 pm

Rivoli Open Sunday

4 December 2022 from 2 to 6 pm

Opening hours during exhibition

Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 2 to 6 pm
or by appointment

For further inquiries:

Contact Ingrid Van Hecke – Gallery Director

Mail info@huskgallery.com

Tel. +32 478 52 16 46

Website www.huskgallery.com

Address Husk Gallery

Rivoli Building ground floor, Chaussée de Waterloo 690 #12, 1180 Brussels

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